



MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCES

Maryland's Social Services Agency



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DHR CELEBRATES FOSTER PARENT APPRECIATION MONTH

Numerous events planned throughout May to applaud Maryland's Foster Parents

BALTIMORE – The Department of Human Resources and local departments of social services are honoring foster parents during the month of May in recognition of the positive contributions they continue to make in the lives of children.

“Maryland has a little over 3,000 foster parents that help to care for the more than 9,000 children who can not safely live with their parents,” said Brenda Donald, Secretary of the Department of Human Resources. “Foster parents are the linchpin that holds things together for these children during what is perhaps the most traumatic time of their lives. The service they provide is invaluable, so we use National Foster Parent Appreciation Month to show our gratitude to them.”

Events planned throughout May range in scope from appreciation dinners like the ones hosted by Allegany, Carroll, Charles, Frederick, Montgomery and Washington Counties to a Mystery Luncheon sponsored by Prince George's County and Sock Hop sponsored by Garrett County. Caroline, Dorchester, Kent, Queen Anne's, Talbot, Howard, Cecil, Harford, and Anne Arundel Counties will celebrate with family fun day activities in local parks.

In addition to the locally sponsored events, First Lady Katie O'Malley is hosting a reception to honor the Foster Family of the Year from each jurisdiction across the state. There will also be a “Walk Me Home” 5K Walk on the Mall in DC. Maryland participation in this walk event is being coordinated by the Maryland Foster Parent Association. Please visit www.walkmehome.org for more information.

The first recognition of May as Foster Parent Appreciation Month began in 1988. The recognition continues to be a way to bring attention to those people who dedicate themselves to building stronger, more positive lives for children.

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The Maryland Department of Human Resources is the state's social service provider. The agency collaborates with 24 local jurisdictions to: provide foster care, adoption and protective services to children; collect and distribute child support payments; and provide temporary cash, food stamps and medical assistance to families. It also administers programs for homeless persons, refugees, migrant workers, victims of crime and women who are displaced, battered or assaulted. Last year, DHR served 638,000 people in need. In terms of its annual budget, DHR is Maryland's fourth largest state agency.

- Martin O'Malley, Governor
- Anthony G. Brown, Lt. Governor
- Brenda Donald, Secretary